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Pulpit Preaching

XIII
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Worth Quoting 2
E. Paul Hovey

THIS IS THE CHURCH

What Can We Believe about the Church? 3
Charles F. Jacobs

The Church and Man's Journey 7
Phillips Packer Elliott

The Church and Her Ordinances 11
Wesley P. Ford

Why I Don't Go to Church 13
Fred E. Luchs

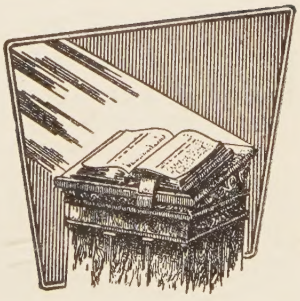
WHEN CHRISTIANS THINK OF DEATH

Good Grief! 18
Gene E. Bartlett

Death Is Not to Be Feared 20
Charles L. Allen

A Time to Be Born and a Time to Die 23
Clarence J. Forsberg

When God Permits Tragedy 27
Edward W. Stimson



WORTH QUOTING

E. PAUL HOVEY

A wise man of the Orient once remarked, "There are three kinds of people in all types of organizations—rowboat people, sailboat people, and steamboat people. Rowboat people need to be pushed or shoved along. Sailboat people move when a favorable wind is blowing. Steamboat people move continuously, through calm and storm. They are usually masters of themselves, their surroundings, and their fate.

Chas. L. Lapp and John W. Bowyer

* * *

Living one day at a time is the magic that lifts the crushing burden from our shoulders and divides our time into manageable portions. It simplifies greatly the increasing complications of living in this era and conserves our energies for the significant tasks. On God's clock for human beings there is no yesterday, no tomorrow—only the great now.

G. M. Mathews

* * *

No greater happiness can come to one than that which comes from living a life which has meaning and purpose outside one's own limited needs.

Manuel R. Holland

* * *

Friendships should be valued as blessings, like health, work that you

(Continued on page 29)

Next month's themes will be "Living Like a Christian" and "Stewards of Christ."

BOOKS FOR PULPIT PREACHING

Readers will welcome the publication of **The Treasury for Special Days and Occasions,** edited by E. Paul Hovey whose "Worth Quoting" column has long been a useful resource for preachers. Many entries (1277 in all) from many sources are listed according to the significant occasions in the Christian and civil calendars. (Fleming H. Revell Co., 317 pp., $3.95)

Dear Mr. Brown by Harry Emerson Fosdick is an unusually meaningful book which will inspire and advise both pastors and lay people. In a series of ingenious letters, the author explores avenues of religious concern and perplexity that challenge and haunt the minds of modern youth. Wise and judicious counsel and a warm and radiant spiritual conviction make a positive contribution to the reader's understanding of life and faith. (Harper & Brothers, 191 pp., $3)

Two more volumes have been added to William Barclay's Daily Study Bible Series. The new volumes are **The Letters of James and Peter** and **The Letters to Timothy, Titus and Philemon.** Most ministers know of this series and the invaluable homiletic contents to be found in the verse-by-verse analyses and the clear and imaginative outlines of "preachable" ideas. (415 and 324 pp. respectively, $2.50 each)

Key Next Door by Leslie D. Weatherhead contains twenty-six sermons representative of the author's closing years as pastor of London's City Temple. The sermons are re-

(Continued on page 17)

Pulpit Preaching

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CHARLES F. JACOBS
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THIS IS THE CHURCH

WHAT CAN WE BELIEVE ABOUT THE CHURCH?

Charles F. Jacobs, First Congregational Church, Waterloo, Iowa

For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. Matthew 18:20.

Whatever else one may say about the church today, this much can neither be denied nor gainsaid—it is not being ignored. Church membership in this nation has skyrocketed to an all-time high. Church attendance is on the increase. Investment in church building has assumed astronomical proportions. The pessimist replies that increased membership and huge investment in buildings is no convincing proof of the vitality of the church. Granted. But we will not dismiss these developments as of no significance.

But what can we believe about the church? Has it become, as some assailants claim, an institution dispensing a sort of aspirin-therapy to a society that is fatally infected with a materialistic secularism? The fact that the church has its enemies is nothing new. There always have been the crepe hangers who have insisted that the church is dying and that the pallbearers are waiting outside the door to give it a decent interrment. We need not be too concerned about these negative people who, for whatever reason they deem just, look upon the church with hatred and contempt. Nor must we make the grave error of assuming that anyone who criticizes the church is her enemy. The everlasting glory of the Protestant church has been her ability to engage in self-criticism. A rather striking illustration of this is the recent book, "An American Dialogue" by Robert M. Brown, a Protestant, and Gustave Weigel, a Roman Catholic. It does not detract from the importance of what is attempted to say that the Protestant can point with pride to his church and then, with equal skill, apply to it sharp criticism, while the Roman Catholic gives an eloquent portrayal of his faith but seems to lack the capacity for searching self-analysis. One leader says "that there is a divine discontent with things as they are in our churches." If that is so it is good news. The church is always at its best when it is moved by dissatisfaction with things as they are.

Let us now come to grips with the question: What can we believe about the church?

I

For one thing, what we believe about the church will be shaped by what we think the church is. To some people it is a building, dedicated to the worship of God, and made sacred through long and cherished associations. But a building is never sacrosanct and we may be certain that when Jesus spoke of the church he did not have in mind the New England style architecture. Other people may think of the church as an ecclesiastical institution, with legislative and judicatory bodies, and an elaborate system of ordinances and sacraments, over which the clergy rule and through them mediate the grace of God to the believer. Again, we may be quite certain that Jesus was not thinking of an ecclesiastical hierarchy when he said "upon this

rock I will build my church."

To the sociologist the church is the embodiment of the religious aspirations of the race. All great human interests eventually become institutionalized. The church is the institutional structure which seeks to give reality to the religious dreams of mankind. Man is a social animal. He fights for his right to be an individual but when he wants to achieve a great objective he enlists the support of his fellows. John Dewey once observed that wars make men warlike and churches make men religious. The church is man's acknowledgment that his salvation is social as well as personal.

But what did Jesus believe about the church? It is clear from the records of his life that he used the term to designate those who believed in the rightness of his cause and had given themselves to its fulfillment. It was the fellowship of those who believed in him and his ideas. When he spoke of the church he simply meant that upon the fellowship of those who believed in him he would build his kingdom of love that would last forever and forever. It was not a building, not an institution, but a fellowship that he had in mind when he spoke of "my church." The vitality of this fellowship would not be determined by its size or the social prestige of its members. He put it like this, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." The New Testament idea of the church is borne out by the translation of the Greek word "ecclesia." In the original Greek the ecclesia was a church, and it was a term used to designate an assemblage of people for whatever reason they had gathered—a philosophical debate, a discussion of military needs, the formation of a political party or the matter of religion. The Christian writers, as they did with so much of the heritage of the ancient world, simply adapted this term to the usage of the Christian world and in time the "ecclesia" became synonymous with the fellowship of those who believed in Christ.

II

But what more can we believe about the church? I am indebted to someone whose name I cannot recall for the penetrating definition of "the church as a human institution with a divine ideal." The church has two distinct groups of critics. The Communist world looks upon it with hatred and contempt, since it stands in opposition to their savage objectives. But there are other critics within our own nation who cannot give themselves to the ministry of the church because of what seems to be the gap between what Christians confess and what they practice. "See!" they say, "the church singing on Sunday the old hymn 'we are not divided, all one body we' and then falling back into denominations bickering the other six days of the week." "See! "they say," the church preaching the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man while at the same time it is one of the most segregated institutions in the land." "See!" they say, "the church proclaiming the ideals of honesty and compassion while its members, in business and political life, are often corrupted and corrupting." We will not deny the charges. These things do happen and those of us who love the church are hurt by them. Yet we are not ready to concede that the church is as bad as our severest critics claim it to be. And they know it. Let something happen in their personal lives under which they reel and they come back to the church to find contact with the refreshing fountains of life. I know. For four years I lived among people who had spent their lives in protest against the church. Yet again and again, faced by the finalities, these same people called upon the ministry of the church for some word that would lift them above the level of defeat.

Let us grant the critic of the church

his worst charges. But this does not damn the church. The church has never made a claim of perfection. The church is not the fellowship of the redeemed, for there are many among her members who stand with their feet in ugliness, but it is a redemptive fellowship. So far as we know the church is the only institution where its members come openly and confess that "like sheep they have all gone astray." In service clubs and other organizations we pride ourselves on how good we are, but in the church we are more cautious, more humble. There are sinners as well as saints in the worshipping congregation.

I believe that the church is often too hard to get into. Too many questions are asked at the door. Too many creeds and doctrines must be affirmed before one can be a member. Jesus made one requirement of those who wanted to join him in the great adventure of kingdom building; he asked them to deny themselves, to take up the Cross and follow him. I think that the best invitation to church membership is the one given by our Lord, "Whosoever will, let him come."

As a student at the University of Chicago it was my privilege to attend the University Church where I could listen to the distinguished minister, the late Edward Scribner Ames, build a temple of the spirit about the worshippers. The spirit and the wisdom of this great man was embodied in the beautiful church which had been built during his ministry. In the front of the church and just above the Communion table there was a deep recess in the walls from which beautiful windows reached upward. During the Christmas season this was the place where the angels would appear in the Christmas pageant. But Dr. Ames felt that the church should make room for sinners as well as saints, for the devil as well as angels. In the rear of the nave, in the window of the echo organ chamber, is a sinister looking little figure carved of stone. It is Satan himself. It represents a motif in Greek ecclesiastical architecture, which has the evil forces of life represented around the edges of the roof with gargoyles and demons. But Satan seated in the window of the echo organ represented Dr. Ames' own idea. He wanted his church open to good men and bad men alike, a place where the devil would be welcomed along with the angels. And if we are to eradicate the evil in human life, what more effective approach can be found than that of bringing evil men under the influence of the Christian faith!

III

This leads us to another stage in the progress of our thought about the church. The church is the means and not the end. It is a grievous error to assume that the church is synonymous with the kingdom of God. Whenever you take the ideal society which Jesus proclaimed and inaugurated and lay it alongside the church, you see how far short the church comes in measuring up to that ideal. The kingdom of God is a description of the presence of God in the hearts of men and women. There are many within the church who have known the presence of God in their lives, but there are others who, for all their professed piety, are mean and little in spirit. And there are many outside the church who walk with God and can speak eloquently of his power in their lives. The kingdom is greater than all the churches, and there are some who dwell in that kingdom who have never belonged to a church. But there is a certain warning necessary at this point. This view may encourage some to say that I don't need the church; I can get all the religion I need along the lakeside or on the golf links. I reply, however, that though you may not need the church the church needs you. There is a kingdom of peace to be won and it will take the collective effort of all men of goodwill. The church is the

instrument by which we may build that kingdom.

The church, with its many facilities for education, for worship, for social service, has the privilege and the responsibility of cultivating the spirit of love and ethical concern in the hearts of men. Its sacraments, its symbols, and its ordinances have no saving power in themselves. There are many who can claim that they have kept all the commandments of the church, yet they remain small and stinted in soul.

Professor Meland of the University of Chicago says: "The most damnable thing the enlightened and sensitive mind can say about the Christian church is that it is mediocre. Its music is mediocre. Its architecture is mediocre. Its prayers are mediocre. Its parish talk is mediocre. Its celebrations are mediocre." When is a church mediocre? That church is mediocre which thinks of itself as an end rather than a means for the promotion of the kingdom. That church is mediocre which thinks that its reason for being is to boast of its large membership, the size of its budget, the eloquence of its minister and the greatness of its music. These things are important, but they are only incidental to the main business of the church which Jesus founded upon the rock. That church is mediocre which has no word of judgment to bring to bear upon the society of which it is a part. That church is mediocre which is no longer free to preach the gospel, with all its implications, for the changing of our individual lives and the reshaping of the community of man. That church is mediocre which quarrels over doctrines and creeds and Biblical literalism and fails to preach the Christ who lifted life to the level of an art.

Again, that church is mediocre which thinks that it alone is the only saving power within the community. The church must make itself at home on the earth. Let the theologians split hairs over whether the "church is in the world but not of the world." You and I know that the church is part and parcel of this world. Each community is a complex of many institutions and agencies. The vital church will ally itself with the public schools, the various agencies supported through the United Services, and all other community organizations whose purpose is to encourage the spirit, to help the blind see, the lame walk, and to set at liberty those who are enslaved. Through the years I have found the many community agencies and the public schools to be a great strength in what is a common task, the building of a local community that will be one with the world community that is emerging. How can we have a world community unless the local community in which we live embodies all the aspects of that larger community within itself?

IV

We come now to our concluding answer to the question: What can we believe about the church? We have said that Jesus had in mind the fellowship of believers when he announced that "upon this rock I will build my church"; that the church is a human institution with a divine ideal, and that it is a means and not an end. One thing more we must add. The church is an over-arching fellowship that lifts us up out of our partialness, our fragmented existence; out of ourselves into causes that are larger than ourselves, and confronts us with the unfathomable mysteries of life.

Our society is no longer the simple face-to-face kind of society that it once was. Man can no longer face his world alone, but he joins with others of his skill or profession into unions and associations. The laboring man joins the union and business and professional men unite in associations to achieve in group what they no longer can achieve alone. A friend was telling me about a journal he had received. It was an appeal for engineers to unite in an association. The cover picture was of a lone man

standing in front of giant apartment buildings and lofty skyscrapers. The legend at the bottom said, "Why try to face this alone?" Increasingly the individual is swallowed up in blocks that represent his interest. The real danger of this trend lies in the fact that these groups within our society may seek only selfish ends and forget that their ultimate destiny is tied up with the general welfare. Emerson called this concern for the public the Over Soul, and theologians call it God. Through the fellowship of the church we are lifted above our personal ends and brought into relationship with God, in whom we live and move and have our being. In the nave of the First Unitarian Church of Chicago are the chief symbols which represent the various vocations of life. The symbols are of inlaid marble in various color and set in a band around the ceiling. The meaning of the architecture was summed up in four lines that their minister, Von Ogden Vogt, carried on their church bulletin:

Up from the world of the many,
To the over-world of the One.
Back to the world of the many,
To fulfil the life of the One.

If I am ever privileged to help in the building of a sanctuary I would hope for one thing. Some place in the nave I would want a fire-place, symbol of the eternal life of the world. But its real meaning would have to do with the family. The church is our larger family and the hearth would symbolize the family circle. No one of us is adequate to face all of life alone. Added to the loneliness caused by our complex industrial civilization is a sort of cosmic loneliness which has become pronounced in this era when man penetrates outer space. The church is interested in both our joys and in our sorrows. Through the church our joys are sanctified and in our grief we are lifted above the level of defeat. At its best the church is "our hope for years to come, our shelter from the stormy blast." Through the church we are brought into contact with the refreshing springs of love, kindness and compassion. This kind of church is not at all dependent upon size, upon wealth, or magnificent edifices of worship." Wherever two or three are gathered together in my name," said Jesus, "there am I in the midst of them." This was the rock upon which he built his church. In the best sense that church is a family in which the members bear toward each other the same love and concern as are found in the home. So we may say with Whittier:

And so I come for deep rest to this still room;
And from the silence, multiplied
By these still forms on every side,
The world that time and sense have known
Falls off and leaves us, God, alone.

THE CHURCH AND MAN'S JOURNEY

Phillips Packer Elliott, First Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn, New York

And being brought on their way by the church. Acts 15:4.

The church is often thought of as a building, such as this one in which we meet. It can be seen, outside and in. It can be photographed. It can be judged on the merits of its architecture and durability. It has a sign which says that this is such and such a church. If people ask where the church is, one points to the church building. Yet the building is not the church. This is not to underestimate the importance of the building. We need edifices of ever greater beauty to aid us in the worship of God and we need parish houses of ever greater efficiency to aid us in the carrying on of our program. But the church is far more than this. It is a movement; it

is an influence which goes on in the life of the individual and also in the whole life of society.

One has an insight into this kind of church in the passage which we have read as our scripture lesson. Paul has come back to Antioch, his home base and church, after his first missionary journey. There was considerable discussion, even dissension, over the question which was the paramount issue of the early church—namely whether Gentiles would first have to become Jews before they could become Christians. Paul has many supporters in his broad view, but because of the controversy, he and Barnabas and some others, whose names are not given, were sent to Jerusalem, the "mother church," to consult with the apostles and elders there regarding the matter. As they left Antioch it is noted: "And being brought on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria." It is a warm and friendly touch; this send-off by the group in Antioch who sympathized with their point of view and wished them well in it. A group went with them—we do not know how far—probably only a few miles, or even less, to the ship on which they went along the Phoenician coast to the region of Samaria where they disembarked and went the rest of the way by land. But Luke, as he writes the account, does not say that "a group of friends" accompanied them; he says they were brought on their way "by the church." Here was the church in movement, traveling along the road, the companion of these two leaders and friends. There was no doubt a "church" in Antioch where they met for worship; perhaps even in this early day there were more than one. But no building was present here, and none was needed. The church was there without a building—the church in motion that brought them on their way.

One has that picture of the church all through history. As early as the wandering in the wilderness, when Israel was gradually becoming a people, and learning her destiny, she had a church. It went along with her. Any edifice that was erected must necessarily be temporary, for they would soon again be on the march, day after day, year after year. But the church was there none the less. There was the "ark of the covenant," made with care and great reverence, which was carried along with them. There was the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night to remind them of God's leading and presence. One might indeed use our text here, and say that the church brought them on their way—a moving, marching church, that entered life day by day as they faced it, and faced it with them. God did not need a place in which to dwell that would remain fixed and static; He would accompany them wherever they might go. And when one says, "How primitive to think that the church could be moved along this way," let us ask whether it is any more primitive than to say that the church belongs on a certain street corner and is not to be moved.

So in Christian history. The churches, as buildings, have largely disappeared. Where are the buildings, the houses, the upper rooms or lower rooms, where the Christians met in the cities of St. Paul? Most of them cannot be found at all; one looks at the ruins of Corinth for example, and tries to imagine amid all this broken marble and stone where the Christian group, among whom Paul labored for a year and a half, may have met. So churches for the most part are simply to be gazed upon by tourists who may or may not have any interest in their religious influence. They are marked in the guide book to be seen, and seen they are. So with the church which is the building. But the church has come down through the years as a movement more than anything else. "Like a mighty army moves the church of God." It has left few monuments, and in many places none at all,

to testify to its former strength. But it has left its mark on the lives of men, in the transformation of lives and of society. The world has been brought on its way by the church.

We need to think of the church thus in our day. This is a time of great church building, we are told, although the city of New York is doing very little of it. But more important, it should be a time of church influence, of the church in motion wherever life is in motion. For life is always changing. "New occasions teach new duties, time makes ancient good uncouth," and in and out of the stream of life the church must go. Here in this city we see the need in special degree. Think of the fluidity of this city, of the way in which the problems change, the needs vary, the problem assumes new forms. This is not to say that the age-old problem of man's need for a Saviour ever changes, but the places where men are to be found, and the Saviour brought to them, have changed, and will change yet more. Among youth—who could foresee the startling, poignant turn the youth problem would take, as the frustrations of lives denied so much, and especially denied so much love, come out in abnormal and violent ways? Who could foresee the new groups and races as they have moved into the city's life, and who is sufficient to meet the needs of people trying to feel at home in a city which continues to think of them as aliens, even though they may have lived in America for generations? How shall life adjust itself to the size and noise and strain of this city—to its stone and brick pavement, to its indifference to human weariness and longing, to its coldness toward the deepest needs of the heart? To think of the church as static, as fixed upon a corner, would be to lose the church's influence and contact on the vast, moving life of our time. It must be a movement or it will not catch up with life as it is; it will not touch it; it will not help it. The church moves with life on the way.

I

In what ways, then, is the church a movement? How may we think of it in this phrase from Acts, as bringing life on its way? In the first place, we say that it gives man a home; it tells him he is welcome; it is a haven; it is a true fellowship. We know the importance of a welcome which is given by any church. We are mindful of it here, and know that even with the best intentions and plans we often fail, and people go away without feeling that they have been included in the family. Yet in the church, even at its worst, there is always a welcome which exceeds that of other aspects of society. How hard it is to break into the groupings which men have formed! We need to feel that all through life we are among friends, that this is our home.

One reason many people feel so much alone is that they think they have left the church behind. It had a place in their lives once, but no longer. They felt a warm and friendly fellowship, and they still look back upon it with gratitude, but it is gone. They have associated it with a building, or with a particular time in their lives, and now that the building is far away, or that period in their lives succeeded by another and quite different one, their sense of being welcomed has gone away. That part of what the church meant to them has not come with them along the way. But this fellowship can still be ours. The church has not left us, nor need we leave it. Christian friends are all around.

For we are never far from one another. Dr. Van Dusen of Union Seminary wrote a little book some years ago which he called "They Found the Church There," and he described the many places throughout the world where American soldiers and others, to their surprise, found the church. But even though not always the case visibly and geographically, it is always true spiritually. We are always in

touch with one another. Let your faith flow out and it will meet the faith of others. You will know the church is always there. You are in fellowship with Christian people in every corner of the world, and all back through the centuries; you join hands with Christians in Africa on one side and Japan on the other, you reach back and touch St. Francis and St. Augustine and even St. Paul across the centuries. All this is yours, this is the church, you are part of it, a member of this body. You are always in fellowship, you are never alone, you are welcome. Thus the church as a movement brings us along the way.

II

In the second place, the church is always present to lead us. That is why the phrase "get back to the church" is so much the wrong way of putting it. It implies something static, rooted in the past. One must reverse himself, turn around in order to get there. On Wednesday evening Mr. Ribeiro, the young pastor from Argentina who spoke to us, said that to many young people — especially those groups which had brought and held to their old traditions from Europe — the church seemed like a museum and they were not interested in museums. It is true that the church does save things year by year, that it is the great conserver of values, that it gathers up the highest thoughts and deeds of men and will not let them be forgotten. One would not want to have the record of the life of Christ disregarded, unpreserved, unguarded. We want to read that "sweet story of old, when Jesus was here among men," and we want it kept so that it may be remembered and retold over and over again.

But this story would not be remembered if it were just a story. If it were only a museum record, a bit of papyrus preserved under glass, we would look at it with interest, and perhaps memorize part of it, but it would have no effect on our lives. It is not simply a record; it is an experience of the present leading on to the future. The paradox of Christian experience is that the past turns itself into the present and into the future. We cannot look at the record of Christianity, even in its earliest years, and shake our heads in amused pity, as we say, "How far we have come since then." Instead we say, "How far we still have to go!" Men have not outrun the church; it still paces society; it still is revolutionary in its impact on life today. The danger always is that the community will set its hand upon the church and try to make it conform, saying, "You must stop here and let what is be enough." But then the old story is told again, and something breaks through our conformity into a new dream or deed, and Christianity is again on the march, leading men in the way they should go. Whenever the love of Christ is made known to us it always makes us want to be better and to do better. We are always being asked for more than we have given; we see "the cross of Jesus going on before," and we know that we must follow and take up our cross and share in his task. Thus we are being brought on our way by the church.

III

Finally, the church sustains us. It gives us our food. It gives us strength. In the wilderness God fed the people with manna. It came to them each day. They could not store it up, or it would spoil. There was no center to which they could go and get supplies; there was no way of laying up for the future; they were sustained day by day.

If one is in touch with the church he is in touch with the source of power. This was one of the great insights of the Reformation. The spiritual life did not mean that one could store up, either by payment of cash or by acts of devotion, a large supply of merit upon which one could draw as needed. Against that the reformers rebelled, and said that the spiritual life in itself brought its own food, that

the just would live by faith, and if he believed and loved God, he needed no great reserve supply, he would be provided day by day. According to his faith it would be done unto him.

The church does not continue because it has a remarkable "story," not even because it has a remarkable ideal. Neither of these explains the church. It continues because it is the way God supplies life with power. Here is vitality for today; here is strength enough to endure and to overcome. The building may be small or large, simple or ornate. The company may be talented or ignorant. It is the spirit which matters— the daily reaching out to God, and the daily gifts which are given by His hand. Thus we are sustained, brought on our way by the church.

THE CHURCH AND HER ORDINANCES

Wesley P. Ford, Central Christian Church, Pasadena, California

There are two interpretations of religion developed in the Bible. Often they oppose each other, sometimes they can be seen running parallel through history. The Bible contains not one but many patterns. The search for God leads along many roads. The Bible is neither a perfect record nor a record of perfection. It is search and struggle, hope and fear, sin and saintliness. It is all things that characterize growth from infancy.

God is seen first as a tribal deity worshipped by ceremony and ritual with rules governing every area of conduct. After pages of laws the injunction states, "If you are not careful to do all the words of the law that are written in the book, the Lord will bring on you extraordinary affliction."

But under the insight of the prophets, laws and ceremonies were inadequate. God was discovered to have character and life's goal became God-likeness. So religion was not primarily ritual, but justice and mercy and kindness. This larger idea finally included the belief that God is one. Each tribe did not worship a separate deity but the same God.

I

Following the exile these two ideas, a national God worshipped through ceremony, and a universal God worshipped through character, both had supporters. Nehemiah would rebuild the wall to separate God's own from those who were not God's, while Ezra re-established the ritual. In contrast were Ruth, the foreigner whom everyone loved, and Jonah, the missionary sent to a foreign capital to preach.

And so when Jesus Christ launched his ministry he had to declare himself on this issue. What is the essence of religion? This he did with unmistakable boldness. It was a Pharisee in the succession of the ceremonialists who asked Jesus the pointed question, "Which is the great commandment in the law?" And Jesus answered: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets." Pressing the issue further, a lawyer asked, "Who is my neighbor?" And Jesus told the story of the hated Samaritan who proved, without ceremony, to be the neighbor. The choice of Jesus was clearly made. He took his stand in the succession of the moral prophets who called men to emulate the character of God and to express His universality.

Now note a seeming paradox. Jesus' choice was religion as life and not as ceremony. But with this decision he introduced his ministry by the use of ceremony. According to the earliest gospel, the first act of Jesus' ministry was his baptism at the hands of John. Immersion was an old rite. The Jews

had demanded it of proselytes to symbolize their cleansing from idolatry. John was using it now for all whom he was calling to repentance. "In those days Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the Jordan." Jesus, who sought to lift religion from ordinance to life, entered by the door of ordinance.

Why, if he wanted to lift religion above a rite, did he use this rite? I do not know the mind of Christ, but some of the wisdom of his decision is apparent. In this manner he identified himself with the Baptist's call to repentance. Here he humbled himself at the hands of another; here he dramatized a burial and a resurrection that was to lead others for centuries after in their reach for newness of life.

II

An ordinance is an outward expression of an inner experience. The dramatization of a deeply felt experience has two advantages. First, it deepens the experience in one's own life and so provides a firmer grasp. In deepened conviction, radiance is added to the inner life. Second, an ordinance is a witness. Whatever else was in the mind of Christ, by his baptism he publicly approved John's calling men to repentance and said in effect, "Here I stand."

We recognize a uniqueness in the life of Christ that we cannot imitate, but in the use of this sacrament which he employed we too find strength. It may be that Jesus went this way because those who would follow him centuries later would be helped by going this way. If we are in earnest in reaching for newness of life, we can well afford some dramatic ceremonial cleansing from sin and pride. Here some have been lifted out of enclosing walls and set in the larger framework of God's purpose. In this sacred rite there are humility and dedication.

And here too we bear witness. All is not as God would have it in our lives and in our society. We are not as good as we know how to be. We are easily the victims of temptation. Socially, as well as individually, we are strengthened for the upward climb by those who have courage in humility to take a stand saying, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God." This we can do.

Near the close of his ministry Jesus called his disciples apart to the upper room. Here they would keep the feast of the passover, again, an old Jewish rite. But here too the old became the new. While they broke bread, the disciples did not realize the impact of that hour, but later they saw it as his prelude to suffering. And that moment they sought to recapture each week as a sacrament of remembrance. And there is now in this observance an intimate fellowship with Jesus Christ in which we find strength for our weakness, identification with Christians everywhere, and in which we bear witness to others saying, "Here I stand."

Neither Jesus' life nor death were substitutes for our moral responsibility. But there is for us in the Lord's Supper the dramatization of the fact that he was willing to sacrifice, even his life, that all may know the fulness of God's love. We talk much about building the kingdom, but in a real sense the kingdom is first to be received. Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it saying, "Take." God's great gifts are given. Take, this is for you. Even God cannot give life abundant if we will not take it. This is only a ceremony, but back of it God is saying, "Come to feast of life abundant."

III

Jesus rejected ordinances when they were the goal of the religious life. But Jesus used ordinances to help persons grasp the true stature of religious living. One weakness of the church through the years has been its use of ordinances as ends for which they were not intended. Note two serious limitations. First, the ordinance as used by Jesus Christ was a

door into a larger religious life. A quality of life was the end and, therefore, an ordinance was never meant to be a test of fellowship. Christ's judgment was, "By their fruits ye shall know them," and the fruits are words and deeds and attitudes. Samuel was sent to seek out one of the sons of Jesse to become king. The instructions included: "Do not look on his appearance for the Lord sees not as man sees. Man looks on the outward appearance but the Lord looks on the heart." God's judgments are different from ours. We, therefore, will not build fences.

There is much evidence that God is blind to barriers we raise. Note some whom God is using gloriously. See Martin Niemueller, a German Lutheran, in the name of Christ defying Nazism and suffering the consequences. See Kagawa, a Japanese Presbyterian, who went down into the slums of Tokyo to dramatize the love of God. See E. Stanley Jones, an American Methodist, in America and around the world calling men and women to humility and prayer in the name of Christ. The young student minister in the little church in Aboshi, Japan, where I served, owes his Christian life to the influence of E. Stanley Jones. These whom we have mentioned represent a variety of backgrounds. They interpret the ordinances differently, but they are God's prophets.

Second, ordinances are not tests of fellowship, neither are they substitutes for religious living. Baptism symbolized one's birth to a new life. It was never meant to be a substitute for the new life. Sharing in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and remembering thereby Christ's suffering is not to fulfill one's religious obligations. Rather it is to find strength which will make possible religious living in days of temptation and frustration. The roads that lead many to the Christian life are not substitutes for the Christian life.

Jesus took his stand with those who made religion the way of the righteousness and the love of God among men. To attain this end, but more to point the way for others who would need help, he embraced and used ordinances. We are weak human beings, standing in need of help, and through the years many have been lifted in their reach for the Christian life by ordinances.

But Jesus never lost sight of the goal. Always he was pressed for the meaning of religious living. As the pressure mounted and as though to answer with a sense of finality, he painted a vivid picture in words the meaning of which was unmistakable: "Then will the King say, 'Come, . . . inherit the Kingdom . . . for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me! . . . As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me." This is the religious life which ordinances help us grasp.

WHY I DON'T GO TO CHURCH

Fred E. Luchs, First Congregational Church, Ann Arbor, Michigan

What's your reason? Give it. Maybe you could stir the Church to action. The Church might be in love with itself and fail to see wherein it lacks. Will you let me share with you some reasons given me for not attending Church?

I

"Because, Padre, I don't believe we need the Church. Now don't get me wrong. I believe in religion and think Christianity the best religion. But think of all the money we could save if we had

no churches."

Friend, let me answer that by asking you some questions. Could we carry on education without schools? Or establish law without courts? Or maintain music without conservatories? Or have movies without theaters?

If we were to kill the Church, Christianity would lose power. Every idea needs a vehicle to carry it. Ideas have neither legs nor wings. The purpose of the Church is to carry forward the ideas of Jesus and adapt them to a particular age. The Church is the guardian of these ideas. Scholars who know the teachings of Jesus must leap over nineteen hundred years of history and interpret those ideas for our day.

These scholars work through the Church. The Church is the educational center through which the people learn what religion is. Without the Church how would we learn? Who would teach the classes? Without a church religious knowledge would be pulled apart and carried in every direction. Who would uphold the standards and keep us close to the home base saying, "This is religion"?

We need the Church to inspire the people. When their spirits fall, and they lose high Christian faith; when they near the brink of paganism; when they lose their spiritual direction, the Church leads on. Without the Church the people would lack compass.

After we have been inspired, we need a Church organization to channel our good resolves. If we had no church, who would ferret out social facts? Who would arouse us to give money to the needy? How could we send boxes to our suffering brethren across the seas? How could we help the underprivileged? How could we translate good motives into quick action? How could we organize our efforts to help mankind? Our results would be as efficient as the indiscriminate passing out of Christmas baskets where one family gets twelve and others get none. Our altruistic interests in our neighbors need organization.

II

"Churches may be O.K., Padre, but not for me. I won't go because I was forced to go when I was a boy."

I can see you now, son. I'll wager Pa got his shotgun out of the bedroom. There he stalks behind you. In mother's hand I see a long blacksnake whip. Big sister has a dagger in her hand. By force the three of them bring you to the Sunday School door. You are handcuffed to a table and ready to be taught.

Have you given up everything you were forced to do as a child? Face washing? Especially behind the ears? How many years since you cleaned your teeth? What a disreputable character you would be if you gave up everything you were compelled to do as a child.

"But, Padre, that way I got enough religion to last me until I die."

You mean you ate enough oatmeal and cod liver oil in childhood to nourish your body for life? Imagine a new player saying to the football coach: "Coach, I'll play every Saturday, but don't expect me to practice daily. I had enough exercise when I was in grammar school." Or do you really think that suit of clothes you are wearing will last you until Death calls?

"Padre, I don't go to Church because I'm just as good as people who go."

Son, how do you know you are? Do you know how they face misfortune? Temptation? Fear? Aren't you playing the "pharisee" when you say you are just as good as some other person? By what scientific proof or religious law do you know you are? Are you saying, "Members need the Church to be good, but I don't?" Did you ever hear a person say, "I'm just as well educated as those who have gone to school"? He is saying that he

doesn't need the educational system. He believes that he can pick up reading and writing so readily that he doesn't have to go to school as others have. The person who believes he needs no mental and spiritual stimulation is a conceited pharisee. The Church member admits he needs this help.

"Padre, I don't go to Church because it isn't perfect."

Are you planning to be a bachelor because one-fourth of our marriages end in divorce courts? Did you avoid the public schools because some of our teachers are ill-prepared? Do you stay away from our courts because some lawyers are shysters? Do you shun police protection because some cops have been bribed?

III

"Padre, I don't go to Church because I can worship God in nature."

How many times have you? Some people who claim that they can worship God in nature are disloyal to that particular pantheistic god. If Church members were as disloyal to and ignorant of their God, the Church would die. These critics don't frequent God's fields and forests enough to have a speaking acquaintanceship with a god of nature. If they took their nature religion seriously, they would be painting sunsets and learning to know the names of the plants which grow there, of the insects which crawl there, and of the birds which sing there. But they overlook the wildflowers, run from the insects, and fail to hear the song of the birds. I'm thinking of some of our local Sunday School teachers who are so skilled in this nature field that they have each been awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. These men are not saying, "I don't have to go to Church." They are in our Church every Sunday. Nature to them is not God. It is one of the many ways of finding Him.

Some people who claim they worship God in nature, do go to nature. But their ways of "worship" are strange. A husband once said to his wife, "I don't have to go to Church. I can worship God in nature." To which the wife replied: "When did you worship, John? Was it last week when you worked in the yard and a stone concealed in the grass broke the blade of your lawn-mower? Or was it the day that you discovered that a blight had killed your flowers? Or do you mean the day that the birds ate the seeds you were saving for an experiment? I was there, John, on every occasion, and from what you said I don't think you were worshipping God. Or remember the day you lost three balls in the rough and broke your favorite driver? You used religious language, John, but you had the words in wrong order." What some of us call worshipping God in nature is no more worship than sleeping in a Church pew is worship.

Some of us are worshipping God in nature, using it as a substitute for the Church, but we are playing a game of spiritual solitaire. We persist in being soloists when the day calls for a grand chorus. If we confine our religious exercises to nature, what are we doing about relieving racial tensions and bringing aid to hungry brothers across the seas? How are we attacking social problems? In what ways are we extending brotherhood? How does your worship in nature bring you face to face with your brother? The problems of our world are not solved by each man departing this world and finding a good feeling in the woods. They are solved by cooperative thinking and acting.

"Padre, I don't go to Church because I believe a community can be just as good without a Church."

IV

Dean Brown tells a story of a man who tried to found a town without a Church. He laid out a model town: schools, a hospital, a theater, a clubhouse, parks, and playgrounds. He stipulated that no property was to be

used for religious purposes. After a few years things were going badly. Women did not want to live in his town. Teachers stayed away. Parents did not wish to rear their children there. Finally the whole enterprise seemed to be going to pieces, and the founder, fearing bankruptcy, published this manifesto:

> To whom it may concern: God knows that there is no such person as God and my motto has always been, To Hell with religion. But for some fool reason, which no man can fathom, I have found by experience that we cannot do business in this country on any other basis than that silly bit of sentiment which we stamp on our coins, 'In God we trust.' Therefore, infernal foolishness though it all is, I have sent out for a parson, and we are going to build a church.

Some reasons given for not attending Church are as irrational as this squib entitled, "Why I Don't Go to the Movies":

> "No one speaks to me; the movies are so unfriendly. When I go, they ask for money. When I get home from business, I am tired and must rest. I saw a poor picture once. It made me nervous, and I decided not to go again. There are so many hypocrites attending the movies that I think I should not go. Movies may be a good thing, but I got out of the way of going. I stay away from the movies because I went too much when I was a child. I don't go to the movies because they admit undesirable people. I don't go to the movies because the directors never call on me."

As a Protestant you have the right to criticize your Church. When it steps out of bounds, let your righteaus indignation rise up. Keep it on high standards.

But where it fulfills its high obligations, cheer it. And use it.

A young enthusiastic minister came to a new church, but alas, the people followed not his dreams. The men played golf Sunday morning. The women indulged in bridge during the week. The young people never came inside the church. The children attended Sunday School irregularly. Finally one Sunday morning the minister announced, "This church is dead. Next Sunday morning we shall conduct the funeral services."

The next Sunday the Church was packed. The minister preached a splendid sermon on the history of the Church—shared records of the pains it had eased, the troubled minds it had soothed, and the aching hearts it had given balm. He spoke of the contributions it made to the community. When he had concluded his sermon, he said, "Come forward, people, to view the corpse lying in the casket." The people came to the front of the church. As each worshipper looked down into the casket, upon his face there came a puzzled expression. For as each one looked down into the casket he peered into the face of a mirror.

Why are you, as a layman, so important to Protestantism? In the Roman Catholic church members are divided into two classes, priests and people. But in your Protestant Church you are on the same level as ministers. You are entitled to the honor because our Protestant forefathers established the principle of the priesthood of all believers. That means all Protestants are on the same level and you are a priest. How will you handle your privilege?

If the Church fails to live up to our high standards, maybe the person to set it right is the one whose face we see in the mirror.

A herdsman far up in the State of Montana was asked one time what he did when he was not herding sheep. He replied, "Well, I play my violin and I listen to the radio." But one day his violin got badly out of tune and how to get it back in tune again was

a problem. Finally, he conceived the apparently fantastic idea of writing to the sponsor of a certain program asking for the sound "a" so that he could tune his fiddle.

With the sponsor's insight into the advertising value of complying with such a request, a letter was sent him to the effect that on such and such a day at a certain time he would hear "a" sounded over his radio. And sure enough, as he listened at the specified time, "a" was sounded once, then a second time, and the herdsman tuned his violin.

When our lives get out of tune, we come to Church to hear again that note which will send us fortified into life tuned for more effective living.

BOOKS FOR PULPIT PREACHING from page 2

produced pretty much as delivered and lack perhaps the skillful transformation from the spoken to the written word which we have previously found in his sermon books. There is spirit and fire in these pages and the mind, heart, and talent of one of Christendom's great modern spokesmen comes through with ringing clarity and force. (Abingdon Press, 256 pp., $3.50)

In Christ, a series of 364 daily meditations published in the format of his other devotional volumes, which have helped millions, crystalizes the thinking of E. Stanley Jones regarding the great affirmations of New Testament faith. Here are to be found echoes of familiar ideas which for more than a generation have stirred deeply the lives of Christians in both the East and the West. Pertinent insight, crisp and meaningful phraseology, living illustrations, and a genuine personal witness make this book an excellent companion for daily meditation. (Abingdon Press, 380 pp., $2.50)

GENE E. BARTLETT
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WHEN CHRISTIANS THINK OF DEATH

GOOD GRIEF!

Gene E. Bartlett, Colgate Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, New York

Sometimes you wonder where we ever get the phrases in our common speech. There is, for example, that exclamation which we use on some occasion, "Good grief!" It seems to be available for any one of a number of uses. We use it to express surprise or concern or almost any explosive emotion. Common sense would seem to deny that these words belong together.

But running throughout the experience recorded in the New Testament is a recurring thought that grief on occasion, may, indeed, be good for the soul of a man. This truth is expressed particularly in words Paul wrote in the seventh chapter of II Corinthians: "For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret." The setting for these words helps us understand them. Paul had written earlier letters to the Corinthians, for there had been division and rebellion in the church. Finally he wrote a letter filled with plain speech in which he called them to task for their division and contention and stated his claims as an apostle. This letter he sent by his faithful friend Titus, and then he waited for an answer. As time went on he wondered whether he had done the right thing. How would the church at Corinth react? Paul went on to Ephesus and Troas and finally to Macedonia hoping all along that Titus would return with the word. In Macedonia Titus finally came, and the word he brought gave a great lift to Paul's spirit. The church at Corinth had read his letter and finally had been led by it to repentance. They were now eager to see him and urged him to come. In relief and gratitude Paul wrote again. He said that he was sorry that his other letter had hurt them, but he had felt it was necessary. Now he knew that the hurt had brought a real good. So he added the words which are central in our thought. "For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret."

I

First, there is a grief that brings us to a deeper personal relationship with God. The spiritual stories of men are too full of this truth for it to be overlooked. There are ways of life by which we do come to grief, and that may be exactly the way that God brings us back to Him. Wasn't that true for Peter? That morning when he wept as the fact of his denial broke in upon him was the hour of his repentance, and it saved him. That was a godly grief that day when Peter wept. Without it his whole life would have been different.

Isn't the truth seen also in Jesus' picture of the Prodigal Son? Suppose he had never come to the hour when he longed to be at his father's home. If it had not been for that pain that came to him in the hour of his exile, he might never have said, "I will arise and go to my father." It was his grief which started him home again.

Our word says that this kind of grief produces repentance. That's God's hand in it. Real repentance has a special mark about it. It isn't just feeling ashamed. Nor is it just coming to fear the consequences of what you have done. Sheer self-preservation can bring that fear. Neither is it the coming to be disgusted with yourself about your way of life. All of these may be part of it, but real repentance has something else in it. It was seen

in the relation of the Corinthians to the Apostle Paul. It was seen in the action which followed Peter's weeping. It is clear in the story of the prodigal. In every case one thing more took place: a broken relationship was restored. That in the long run is the mark of a real repentance.

II

Or again, grief does lead us also to restore relationships with one another. Many a life is bearing the pain of a broken human relationship that ought to be restored. It touches almost every side of life, relations within the family, within business, with our friends. Who can calculate the weight of grief that comes from such strained personal relationships! But can that very grief call us to seek reconciliation and put things aright?

One of the most poignant pictures in the whole Old Testament to me is that of Joseph receiving his brothers in Egypt. He had every reason to hold bitterness against them. Had they not sold him into captivity? It had been eleven against one. Now here they were begging for his help, not knowing that it was he. It was a moment which could have been turned to a bittersweet vengeance. All he had to do was to reveal himself as the one they had wronged and turn them away hungry. But something awakened in his heart, a godly grief, so great that he had to leave the room lest they should see his weeping. And he came back into their presence to begin the restoration of a broken relation.

This goes even beyond those face to face contacts of every day. Some of us have lost touch with our brothers who live in other areas of our society.

Years ago a young student from Denison University, Miriam Teichner, spent her summer assisting in the South Chicago Neighborhood House. Here she worked with children who had grown up under the shadow of the steel mills. She went to their homes and saw crowded conditions beyond anything she knew existed. From a privileged home and a quiet college town she came to this area. Her whole experience brought pain and grief as she saw how other people often had to live. She put her feeling into lines which are a prayer, touched with pain.

God — let me be aware.
Let me not stumble blindly
down the ways,
Just getting somehow safely
through the days,
Not even groping for another
hand . . .
God — let me be aware.
Stab my soul fiercely with
others' pain.
Let me walk seeing horror and
stain.
Let my hands, groping, find
other hands.
Give me the heart that divines,
understands.
Give me the courage, wounded,
to fight.
Flood me with knowledge,
drench me in light.
Please, keep me eager just to
do my share.
God — let me be aware.

Grief can do that, send us seeking for one another.

III

And one thing more, real grief can be a preparation for greater usefulness. Today's strength is often yesterday's pain.

There are few stories in modern times that illustrate this more vividly than one which was first written up during the Second World War. It is a true story in all its details reported by a competent journalist in Harper's Magazine. It begins in the early days of Hitler's movement in Germany. A handful of young fanatics planned and carried out the assassination of Walter Rathenau, a high government official, the first Jew in public life to lose his life under the Hitler movement. When the young men were apprehended and placed in prison one of them received a very strange note. It was actually written to his

mother by the mother of Rathenau the man who had been killed. Rathenau's mother said in her note that she was writing to express her sympathy. She said that while she grieved for her son who had been killed, her pain, surely, was not as great as that of being the mother of a boy who was one of the killers. The note was sent on to prison, and the young man reading it was amazed. What kind of person could write such a note? What kind of faith was this! He began to study the Jewish religion, seeking answer. Upon his release from prison after some years, he escaped from Germany and joined the French Foreign Legion. Wherever possible he visited the places associated with Jewish history. He learned to speak and to write the language. Over a period of years he associated himself closely with the Jewish people, their plight, their hopes, and their fears. Then he dropped out of sight. Not even his friends knew where he was. But one day walking on the dock of a port in Southern France a war correspondent who had known this young man saw a familiar figure pass, dressed in the working clothes of a porter. He followed and finally approached him and asked the question. Yes, it was the same man. He took him inside where the story could be told. The German had deliberately taken this job in a seaport in order that he might be the go-between to help persecuted Jewish families escape from Germany. Already he had helped over three hundred find their way to freedom. Over the years this man had made a complete turn around. The assassin was seeking to make restitution for his crime. It stands as a true reminder of the words Paul wrote centuries before, "Godly grief leads to repentance," and out of that repentance came a tremendous power and usefulness.

DEATH IS NOT TO BE FEARED

Charles L. Allen, First Methodist Church, Houston, Texas

I

Let's talk about death.

Some will protest. We do not want to hear the word "death" even mentioned. We prefer to go on pretending there is no such thing as death. We keep our age a secret and refuse to believe we are getting older. To maintain the illusion of eternal youth, we enlist the aid of health clubs, dressmakers, tailors and beauty parlors. We buy creams and lotions, hair dyes and vitamin pills.

We recall that Job said, "If a man die, shall he live again?" (Job 14:14). We emphasize the "if" as though there is some doubt about whether or not a man dies. More properly we should say, "When a man dies." We try to disguise death with flowers covering the casket. We prepare a dead body to make it look lifelike. We dress the body in beautiful clothes and color the cold cheeks, but the dead body is without any life. Dodge the fact as we will, death is real.

Some of us try to be nonchalant about death . We take the attitude of living today and not bothering about what lies beyond. Maybe nothing lies beyond, we say. Or if there is something else, I'll face it when it comes. That seems smart to some, to others it seems brave. Until—until someone I profoundly love has entered into that experience. Even if I am unconcerned about myself, I would hate to admit that I had grown so cold and indifferent as to not love any other person enough to care. My child, my wife, my mother, my friend—when death comes to that one, is it smart or brave for me to be nonchalant—laissez-faire—about death?

After the death of his wife Arthur John Gossip preached, "You people in the sunshine May believe the faith, but we in the shadow must believe it.

We have nothing else." Yes, now you may have a choice, but sooner or later comes a time when there is nothing else you can do but believe.

Some refuse to think of death; some are nonchalant about it; others live in constant dread and fear of death. They read everything they can find on the subject, talk with all who will listen, they cannot get the question off their minds. Some man writes a book about having previously lived in other bodies and the book becomes the nation's best seller.

The Christian also is concerned about death, but with still a different attitude. Listen to the Christian sing: "We are marching to Zion, the beautiful city of God"; "I am bound for the promised land"; "There's a land that is fairer than day"; "When we've been there ten thousand years." For the Christian, death is not a monster to be feared; it is a friend to be embraced.

The Christian believes in Him who said: "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (John 11:26); "In my Father's house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you . . . that where I am, there ye may be also . . . Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14).

Believest thou this?

II

James Weldon Johnson wrote a wonderful poem which he called, "Go Down, Death." It came out of his childhood memories of the sermons of the old Negro preachers. One of the verses reads:

"And God said: Go down, Death, go down — Go down to Savannah, Georgia — Down in Yamacraw — And find Sister Caroline — She's borne the burden and heat of the day — She's labored long in my vineyard — And she's tired — She's weary — Go down, Death, and bring her to me."

Another one of the verses reads: "While we were watching round her bed — She turned her eyes and looked away — She saw what we couldn't see — She saw Old Death. She saw Old Death — Coming like a falling star — But Death didn't frighten Sister Caroline — He looked to her like a welcome friend — And she whispered to us: I'm going home — And she smiled and closed her eyes."

The poem ends with these words: "Weep not, weep not — She is not dead — She's resting in the bosom of Jesus."

Peter Marshall, in his sermon entitled, "Go Down, Death," tells a wonderful story of a little boy with an incurable illness. Month after month the mother tenderly nursed him. But as the time went by, the little fellow gradually began to understand he would not live. One day he quietly said, "Mother, what is it like to die? Mother, does it hurt?"

Tears filled the mother's eyes and she fled to the kitchen to see about something on the stove. She knew the question must be faced. She leaned against the kitchen cabinet, her knuckles pressed white against the wall, and breathed a hurried prayer, "Lord, tell me how to answer him." And the Lord did tell her, immediately she knew what to say.

She returned to his room. "Kenneth," she said, "you remember when you were a tiny boy you used to play so hard, when night came you would be too tired even to undress, and you would tumble into mother's bed and fall asleep? That was not your bed . . . it was not where you belonged.

"In the morning you would wake up and find yourself in your own bed in your own room. Your father had come — with big strong arms — and carried you away. Kenneth, death is just like that. We just wake up some morning and find ourselves in the other room — our own room where we belong — because the Lord Jesus loved us."

The little lad never questioned again. Several weeks later he fell asleep just as she had said. That is what death is like.

And there is something else to be said — when the little boy woke up

That Morning, the pain and weakness caused by his illness was gone — gone forever. Some other things will be gone That Morning: the endless procession of fears which have tortured someone's mind day and night; the drunkard's thirst like the fires of hell; the bitter disappointments and the crushing pain of defeat; the tears of sorrow that shut out the sunlight; the deformed body; the broken dreams; broken hearts; and so many more things.

It is as John said, "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Revelation 21:4).

III

What is it that takes the fear of death out of the mind of the Christian? Do not fail to hear the message as it is proclaimed. It goes something like this:

A man by the name of Jesus once lived. One Friday He was crucified. After one of the soldiers had thrust a spear into His side to make sure He was dead, he probably turned away saying, "That one didn't take long." Simon Peter, one of Christ's followers, was heard to say, "I go a fishing." There was nothing else left to do. He had had visions of Christ bringing in a kingdom, but now He was dead. So it was back to the little boat with its patched sails, back to mending the nets.

Came Sunday morning. Three women had come to anoint His body. They found the stone rolled away and His tomb empty. Two of the women left. "But Mary stood without the sepulchre weeping." She saw a man but did not recognize him. Then he said, "Mary." The way he spoke her name! No one else had said it like he had. Just that one word, yet all of heaven was in it. She cried, "Master!" She knew. There was no doubt. It was He.

That afternoon some friends of His who lived in Emmaus recognized Him by the way He broke the bread. That same night, ten of the disciples were together when He appeared to them. They never doubted again. Eight days later, He invited Thomas to "reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing." Thomas answered, "My Lord and my God" (John 20:27,28).

Others saw Him. Some through their physical eyes. Others, as did St. Paul, through the reality of a spiritual experience. They went everywhere telling about His resurrection. It wasn't a story they invented. Would any man have invented such a story so that he might have been crucified upside down, like Peter? Or to get his head chopped off, as did Paul? Or to get stoned to death, as did Stephen?

The Bible says, "Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord" (John 20:20). The Greek word here for "see" does not mean to look through your physical eyes, as you look at a mountain, or at another person, or at the words on a printed page. The word "see" here means inner sight — perception — understanding.

"When the disciples saw!" They were never afraid again — not even of death. Peter was to be executed one morning at daybreak. The night before he did not pace the floor of his cell as some wild animals might have. Instead, he calmly lay down and went to sleep. In explanation of the change in those who "saw," their enemies "marveled and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13).

We, too, stand before an open grave. We see one standing by. He calls our name. We can never explain it. We only know it is true. We "see" the Lord and we hear Him saying, "Because I live, ye shall live also." And we know it is true.

A TIME TO BE BORN AND A TIME TO DIE

Clarence J. Forsberg, First Methodist Church, Eugene, Oregon

The title is taken from a very lovely and haunting passage of the Bible. It is found in that strange book of the Old Testament called Ecclesiastes.

This is part of the ancient Jewish wisdom literature; and you would hardly describe it as Christian. It is filled with pessimism and sorrow. The writer thinks that man was born for trouble, and that nothing much can be done about it. If you are acquainted with Norman Vincent Peale's publications, and then imagine the extreme opposite of the point of view which he represents, you will know something of what Ecclesiastes is like. According to this author, everything in history repeats itself. People are born, they labor and toil and suffer, and maybe if they are fortunate they enjoy life for a few brief years, and then they die. There is no point in trying to achieve anything because life ends in death at the last, and all is lost. If a man works real hard and manages to save his money, he will only have to leave it for someone else who did not labor in order to earn it. Wisdom is no help, because in the end, death comes to the wise man and the fool alike. Make what you can of life's fleeting moments of pleasure, because it will soon be over. So runs the still, sad theme music of Ecclesiastes.

However, there are some unforgettable phrases and passages in the book. Such a passage, for example, is the one that I have already described as lovely and haunting. It is in the third chapter of the book, and in it the author is speaking of how life is made up of opposites. He says, "For everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven:

A time to be born, and a time to die;
A time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
A time to kill, and a time to heal;
A time to break down, and a time to build up;
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn, and a time to dance;
A time to cast stones away, and a time to gather stones together
A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
A time to seek, and a time to lose;
A time to keep, and a time to cast away;
A time to rend, and a time to sew;
A time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
A time to love, and a time to hate;
A time for war; and a time for peace.

What the author is really saying is that the boundaries of a man's life are circumscribed by fate. This is the purest kind of fatalism. When a man's time to die has come, nothing that he can do, and nothing that anyone else can do, will prevent that death. It is in the cards, and that is all there is to be said.

It is like Somerset Maugham's parable about the servant who came home from the marketplace, trembling and pale, and said that he had been jostled in the crowd by a woman, and when he had turned around he saw that the woman was Death. She had made a threatening gesture toward him. He begged for a horse, to get away from the city and from his fate. He would ride all the way to Samarra, and thereby escape her. The master gave him a horse, and he fled in terror. Later on the master went to the market, and he encountered Death. He asked why she had made the threatening gesture toward his servant, and she replied, "That was not a threatening gesture . . . it

was only a start of surprise. I was astonished to see him in Bagdad, for I have an appointment with him tonight in Samarra."

There are many people today who believe in this kind of fatalism, and some of them try to equate it with the will of God. They think that our fate is written in the stars, or in the cards, or somewhere, and that we cannot escape it. I do not want to spend my time discussing the pros and cons of this, so I will simply state that I am in complete disagreement with their point of view, and everything it represents.

In other words, I have to disagree with the real meaning of the author of Ecclesiastes. What I would like to try to do is to breathe a Christian interpretation into some pre-Christian wisdom. He has described as well as anyone could the paradoxes of life, but what they mean to him and what they mean to us are two different things. I want to think of the words, "There is a time to be born, and there is a time to die . . ."

I

The first thing I would say is that there is nothing in man's experience more powerful than new life demanding to be born.

Out here in the Pacific Northwest where we enjoy such a mild climate, we sometimes forget how dramatic spring can be, especially in places where winter means ice and snow and bitter cold. If you have ever lived in the midwest, for example, you know what happens when winter finally has to relinquish its grip and give way to spring. The whole earth seems to literally burst forth with life. Virgil Kraft, reflecting on this, wrote these lines:

Spring shows
What God can do
With a drab and dirty world.
Deep in the heart of all things good
Is the urge to grow and blossom.
One might as well order back the buds
As to defy the irresistable intention of men
To be better!

There is a time to be born, and strange as it may seem, you cannot fool nature. It knows when that time has come, and there is the powerful explosion of new life.

What is true if the world of nature is also true in the world of ideas. There is nothing any more powerful than a new idea waiting to be born. Think for a moment about our own history as a nation. Think back to the framers of the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution, and reflect on their courage and their foresight. The odds were all against them. Anyone in his right mind would have bet against the success of what they were trying to do. But they were possessed of an idea that men could live together in a new kind of freedom and unity, and that individuals had certain inalienable rights, and that idea was waiting to be born. When the time came, it was like a mighty, irresistible force that simply swept away the obstacles placed in its path by those who tried to resist it. A few years ago we witnessed the same thing happening in India, and even more recently in Ghana. "There is a time to be born," and in the world of ideas, when that time comes, you cannot fool history. You can resist with all your strength, but the idea will prevail.

What the writer of Ecclesiastes was talking about, of course, was the life of a man. He thought that birth and death were scheduled events, and therefore that they could not be avoided. He was skirting on the edge of a great truth, at least. You cannot fool that new life forming in a mother's womb. When the time comes, the child demands to be born.

There is a story about a university professor who was about to become a father, and who was pacing nervously, back and forth, outside the delivery room. Finally the nurse came out, and said, "It's a boy!"

Absent-mindedly, the professor responded, "Ask him what he wants!" Well, what does any child want, even before he knows how to frame it in words? He wants to survive, to live, to grow. It doesn't matter whether he is born to poverty or to wealth. It doesn't matter if he is born to white parents or to Negro parents. It doesn't matter on which side of the Iron Curtain he happens to be born or what his parents' politics might be. He wants to live, and woe to that person, or that system, or that tyranny that gets in his way. The will to live has been planted there by life, and it is one of the most potent forces that there is in all the world.

"There is a time to be born," wrote the author of Ecclesiastes, and there is nothing any more powerful in our experience than the coming of new life.

II

The second time I would say is that there are times when something has to die, in order that something else may live.

There is a time to be born, and there is a time to die, and deep down within us we know that somehow these two great mysteries are intertwined and interrelated. For example, a seed has to die if a new plant is going to live. In the world of ideas, old notions and old ideas have to die to make way for new truth. When new nations are born, such as India or Ghana, it means that old orders are passing away. When the new idea that there are no second-class citizens in America is born, the old idea that you can separate people according to color or race is going to have to die. We see it all around us: something has to die, in order that something else might live.

When you translate this into human experience, it seems like a cruel thing at first. But there are some things that suggest themselves to us right away, and one of these is that the highest and noblest thing any man ever does is when he voluntarily lays down his life in order to save another. This is not something we learn in a book or figure out according to the rules of logic. It belongs to the wisdom of the heart. Leslie Weatherhead tells about a university student, brilliant and talented, who lost his life in rescuing a small boy from drowning. It later turned out that the lad who was rescued was feebleminded. But Weatherhead said that no one ever suggested for a single moment that it was a bad bargain, or that it was a foolish thing for the young man to risk and lose his life to save the boy. Instead, people saw it as a noble, heroic, and even Christlike deed.

Bishop Enslee tells how, as a boy, he heard a famous old preacher of a bygone generation. Two things from that sermon stayed with him. One was the text, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered you together as a hen gathers her chicks, and ye would not." The other was a story with which the preacher closed his sermon. He told how, out on the prairies of Australia, he had once seen a hawk attack a prairie chicken and her brood of chicks. At the first sight of the hawk, the mother hen sent out an air raid alarm which brought her little fluffy children running to hide beneath her wings. Then he described with vividness how the hawk struck at the mother and her brood. Down and down again the marauder came like a dive bomber, and each time the mother struck back, as well as managing to keep her brood safely beneath her. Finally, after a long and bitter struggle, the little prairie hen beat off the attack. But it cost her; the beak and talons of the hawk had sunk deeply. There was a crimson stream flowing down her wing, and there was a scarlet stain on the yellow fluff of the chicks. They had been saved from the hawk, but only by the vicarious sacrifice of the mother.

Now lift that up to a human level, and see how noble and heroic a thing it is. We may disagree as to where

that instinct has come from, but it is not a sufficient answer to say that it is a man-made ethic or impulse that motivates such heroism. It is instinctive to the race, and whether you choose to attribute it to nature, or to life, or to God, you know that there is a time when it is better to die than to survive.

"There is a time to die," wrote the author of Ecclesiastes, and we recognize that sometimes something has to die in order that something else might live.

III

There is a third thing I would say, and that is that birth, and death, and everything that lies between them, can be safely entrusted into the strong hands of God.

A man ought to come to terms with death early in his life, I think. Life may be short, but it can still be sweet. To love someone dearly is to run the risk of bereavement and separation, but no lover would be unwilling to pay that price. There is a time to be born, and there is a time to die, but a man does not have to live his life as if he were constantly under the gun because of it. The knowledge of it should not threaten us.

You may remember the story about the pilgrim who met the Plague and asked where he was going. Back came the answer, "I'm going to the city to kill 5,000 people." They met again a few days later, and the pilgrim said to the Plague in accusation, "You did not kill 5,000 as you said; instead you killed 50,000." But the Plague answered, "I killed only 5,000; the others died of fear."

The man who can never reconcile himself to the law of life that there is a time to die carries an unnecessary burden through life. "There is a time to be born." We may trust God for that. "There is a time to die." We can safely entrust that into His hands as well. By so doing, we free ourselves to live life at its highest and its best. John Wesley was once asked by a lady how he would spend his time if he knew that he would die the very next day at midnight. He said, "Why, just as I had expected to spend the time. I would preach at Glouchester tonight and tomorrow morning, at Tewkesbury in the afternoon, go to my friend Martin's house for entertainment, converse and pray with the family as usual, retire to my room at ten o'clock, commend myself to the Heavenly Father, lie down to rest and wake up in glory!" John Wesley knew that there was a time to be born, and a time to die. It did not frighten him. He had come to terms with life, and therefore he was free to live life to the very fullest and at its very best.

One of the prisoners at Flossenburg has described the last days of that great martyr and hero, Deitrich Bonhoeffer. The Nazis had imprisoned him and some of his greatest Christian writing issued from a prison cell. On the evening of April 8th, 1945, he had conducted a religious worship for his fellow cellmates. He was just concluding the last prayer when the door opened, and two evil-looking men in civilian clothes came in and said, "Prisoner Bonhoeffer, prepare to come with us." Those words could mean only one thing under the circumstances, the scaffold. His friends said goodbye to him, and then he spoke quietly to the friend who has recorded this last contact. He said, "This is the end . . . but for me, it is the beginning of life." Then he entrusted a personal message to his dear friend, the Bishop to Chichester in England, and the next day at Flossenburg prison he was hanged.

"For everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven. There is a time to be born, and there is a time to die." For the Christian, as for Prisoner Bonhoeffer, the end may well prove to be somehow the beginning of life.

WHEN GOD PERMITS TRAGEDY

Edward W. Stimson, Dundee Presbyterian Church, Omaha, Nebraska

> It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline.
> Hebrews 12:7.

No event in our lives should be wasted. If God is in everything working together with those who love him to bring about good, then we should seek to cooperate with him in every soul shaking experience to glean what good we can from it.

No death is more tragic than that of a little child. Only those who have lost a little boy or girl themselves can fully feel this. Some years ago two British explorers in Egypt came upon a tomb which had been sealed for over 3,000 years. They opened the tomb, and found an exquisitely carved sarcophagus of a little child. Above was this inscription:

> Oh, my life, my love, my little one,
> Would God I had died for thee!

They backed out into the sunshine with tear-dimmed eyes and heads uncovered, sealed the tomb, and left undisturbed the dear form of one whose passing had brought forth such a timeless expression of parental sorrow.

I

I attended a funeral service of a little lad at the Cathedral, and could appreciate how the parents, from their point of view might find comfort in what the priest said. He said that family and the parish could rejoice in that they were especially blessed. For the little boy, dying at the innocent ago of six, before the years of accountability, and having been baptized, was already a saint in heaven, and could help the other members of the family and parish to get there. For, he said, the whole purpose of life is to get to heaven. Heaven a saint to intercede for them there is a great advantage to the other members of the family and the parish. I was glad for anything that could bring comfort to those parents for whom my heart ached.

Yet I could not but wonder about the implications regarding the disposition of God toward us all in this belief: must God's heart be softened by the pleas of a little child? Perhaps, if God is held responsible for the death of that little child!

This whole event raises deep questions for faith. Should we be satisfied to comfort ourselves with the assumption that death, when it occurs, is always God's will, and its providence should not be questioned. My own faith in the love of God as the father of Jesus Christ will not allow me such a simple belief.

II

Without attempting to solve the paradox for philosophical thought involved in the whole question of determinism versus free-will, I must say that I think God has put two limits upon his own freedom of activity in particular events. First, in creating the physical universe with its impersonal laws and processes, God has made the operation of natural events, for practical purposes, automatic, and if we get in the way of storms, and fail to seek refuge in a safe part of a cellar, we shall be hurt regardless of whether our character be good or bad. The people who suffered loss out in Milford recently were not sinners above all the other people in Omaha, any more than were the people in Siloam, on whom the tower fell, according to Jesus, sinners above all the other people in ancient Jerusalem.

Furthermore, people are often responsible for their own tragedies. I believe strongly in safety campaigns.

Statistics prove that they are effective in reducing the number of fatal accidents. We must train children not to run into the street, to cross only at intersections and only after carefully looking both ways and at all vehicles approaching the intersection. We must reach people's consciences about speeding, driving when tired, and driving after having imbibed any alcoholic beverage.

Yet He cannot be entirely divorced from our disasters either. God permits them. God, who is everywhere present, is there when they happen and does not intervene to prevent them. He set in motion physical processes in His natural world which are dangerous; and He has given His children freedom to roam in this dangerous world, and to disobey His laws, physical and moral! And then He is present when those children of His love, by ignorance or deliberate waywardness, get hurt and killed. As Jesus said, He notes every sparrow's fall!

Then why does He permit all this? The answer is in our text from the Epistle to the Hebrews: "It is for discipline that you have to endure. God is treating you as sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline?"

The impersonal operation of nature's laws, with all of nature's harsh and dangerous aspects, is for the discipline of eternal human souls. Were nature always smiling and were there no dread storms and earth quakes, the whole of the natural environment would be different and there would not have been the same spur to character in the circumstances we must meet as persons in the growth of our personalities. It would seem that the natural law of the survival of the fittest operates in the development of human character, as well as in lower nature. A century ago Charles Darwin thought he had explained evolution entirely when he observed one aspect of its complicated process, natural selection. Those variant types best adapted to the changing environment survive and propagate their kind. Jesus noted this same process among people and how the belligerent tend to eliminate their kind when he said, "They that take the sword will perish with the sword" and "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth."

Now in our modern technological age it appears that the careless and heedless cannot survive, and that the careful, the responsible, will inherit the earth. It is responsible character we need to wield the power now in human hands.

III

Yet death must come at some time to all we love, and to ourselves, for the growth in responsible character of the succeeding generations. And love must be smitten at last if love would be deepened. Some people are afraid to love because then the tragedies of life can hurt them more. The Irish poet, S. R. Lysaght, has expressed it in these words:

If love should count you worthy,
and should design
One day to seek your door and
be your guest,
Pause! ere you draw the bolt and
bid him rest,
If in your old contentment you
would remain:
For not alone he enters; in his
train
Are angels of the mist, the lonely
guest,
Dreams of the unfulfilled, the
unpossessed,
And sorrow, and life's immemorial pain,
He wakens desires you never
may forget,
He shows you stars you never
saw before,
He makes you share with Him
forevermore,
The burden of the world's divine
regret!
How wise you were to open not!
— and yet,
How poor if you should turn him

from the door?

"The burdens of the world's divine regret." More of this I know! God treats us as sons, lets us have freedom, even seeming to be out of his sight, that we may develop our own initiative and responsibility. And God has not shrunk from the pain involved in the exercise of such self-restraining love.

And from earth's tragic experiences we as sons must be willing to be disciplined and learn. We must learn to be humble and admit our limitations. In the motion picture version of Moses, in "The Ten Commandments," do you remember how Moses had to reach man's extremity, wandering across the desert of the Sinaitic peninsula, and be utterly humbled, before God could use him? We must all remain humble instruments, needing his help in this world. Perhaps that is why God permits the tragic aspects of life.

We need to learn, too, the inability of any outward circumstances to defeat us if we keep our hearts right with God.

The central figure in Margaret Mitchell's "Gone With the Wind" is Scarlett O'Hara. Her father has been killed in an accident. There was no minister available for his funeral. Will, the man who had been helping on the farm and who was to marry one of her sisters, asked for permission to say something about him. He was not eloquent, but what he said had substance: "He could be licked from the inside . . . What the whole world couldn't do, his own heart could . . . There ain't nothin' from the outside can lick any of us."

So we learn that if sorrow gets us down it is because we have lowered our defense from within and let our faith grow weak and our vision of God grow dim. We can only be defeated from the inside.

Finally, as part of life's discipline, every experience that brings us closer to others who suffer misfortune may help us to share with them the resources of God's help. We read of Jesus himself that "he learned obedience by the things which he suffered" — and how can we, his lesser servants, hope to escape from the sorrows and tragedies of this world? The ministry of comfort is for those who have known every depth of sorrow. Edwin McNeill Poteat has put this truth in four lines:

He cannot heal who has not
suffered much,
For only sorrow sorrow understands,
They will not come for healing
at our touch
Who have not seen the scars
upon our hands.

We are all together sharing the tragic circumstances of this world's life, as well as its joys. And the God who came to earth in Christ and endured the Cross of Calvary is in it all with us. So may the discipline we must endure as sons of God and younger brothers of Jesus Christ ever make us more useful in the ministering service of His strange but soul-enriching love.

WORTH QUOTING from page 2

like, a family that adores you. Keep them in good repair; add to them where you can. For life without good friends who love us and stick by us, despite our faults and imperfections, would be like the sky without the sun.

James Love

Religion ought to be our steering wheel, but too many of us treat it as a spare tire—useful only in a blowout.

* * *

Some people lay their greatest emphasis on non-essentials and get nowhere. Others lay their strongest em-

phasis on that which is of vital importance to life and soul and make marvelous men and women.

Walter E. Isenhour

* * *

The beautiful brain can think out an epic, compose a symphony, invent an engine, develop a telephone, and drive an airship. We are in a fight for the freedom and integrity of the minds of men. I believe that Gospel temperance shall yet transform that innost circle, the human heart, and in its widening sweep the circle of the home, and then society, and then, pushing its argument to the extreme conclusion, it shall permeate the widest circle of them all, and that is government.

Frances E. Willard

* * *

Some men are so nice that they can't be truthful. Others are so truthful that they seem to find it difficult to be nice.

Walter Hughes

* * *

Three things to do—think, choose, and act.

Three things to govern — temper, tongue, and conduct.

Three things to teach — truth, industry, and contentment.

Three things to advise — intellect, dignity, and gracefulness.

Three things to like — cordiality, goodness, and cheerfulness.

Three things to delight in — benevolence, frankness, and freedom.

Three things to avoid — idleness, loquacity, and flippant jesting.

Three things to wish for — health, friends, and a contented spirit.

Three things to cultivate — good books, good friends, and good humor.

Three things to shun — sin, Satan, and selfishness.

Three things to follow — usefulness, holiness, and Christ.

* * *

The Bible without the Spirit is like a sundial by moonlight.

* * *

The best preacher is the one who keeps right on living his sermon after he comes out of the pulpit.

* * *

You are not dressed for Christian work until you put on a smile.

* * *

One who has learned the secret of walking with God does not advertise his troubles.

* * *

The church won't make you a Christian any more than an insane asylum will make you a lunatic. Something has to happen before you get there.

W. Biederwolf

* * *

Doubt is the worst enemy of peace of mind.

* * *

It is better to fill a little place right than a big place wrong.

* * *

It is not enough for the gardener to love flowers; he must hate weeds. It is not enough for a Christian to love God; he must hate sin.

* * *

It isn't how high you go in life that counts, but how you got there.

* * *

The greatest achievement was at first and for a time a dream. The oak sleeps in the acorn; the bird waits in the egg; and in the highest vision of the soul a waking angel stirs. Dreams are the seedlings of realities.

* * *

Ideas come most readily to those who have searching minds. Unless you question the way things are now being done, you are not likely to think of ways to do them better.

Nation's Business

* * *

One realizes the full importance of time only when there is little of it left. Every man's greatest capital asset is his unexpired years of productive life.

P. W. Litchfield

* * *

The reason many people never get anywhere in life is because when

opportunity knocks they are out in the back yard looking for four-leaf clovers.

American Salesman

* * *

Good teaching must be slow enough so that it is confusing, and fast enough so that it is not boring; like all arts, teaching is as much a matter of timing as of form or content; and masters of timing are rare in any art.

Sydney J. Harris

* * *

Some folks entertain a new thought as if it were an unwelcome relative.

Morris Bender

* * *

Let us be of good cheer, remembering that the misfortunes hardest to bear are those which never come.

James Russell Lowell

* * *

Elizabeth Peabody, founder of the kindergarten in America, once ran into a tree in Boston Common. When asked how it happened, she said, "I saw it but I did not realize it." We often see the thing we should do and the way we should be, but we do not realize it sharply enough to do it.

Halford E. Luccock

* * *

Write it in your heart that every day is the best day in the year.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

* * *

The grand essentials to happiness in this life are: something to do, something to love, and something to hope for.

* * *

Wisdom consists not so much in knowing what to do in the ultimate as in knowing what to do next.

Herbert Hoover

* * *

The good life is never gained without honest effort. Moreover, the endeavor seems to require more than just doing for ourselves—the pursuit of a vocation. Usually we must reach out and quietly enrich the lives of others along the way.

Earl Lake

How many parents would attempt to teach Latin or mathematics with no preparation and yet attempt to instruct in the Christian faith with no preparation.

* * *

Many of us spend half our time wishing for things we could have if we didn't spend half our time wishing.

Alexander Woollcott

* * *

It is not what we preach but what we practice that makes us Christians.

* * *

We do not conquer our ideas, but we allow our ideas to conquer us.

Ralph W. Emerson

* * *

The greatest hour of a man's life is when an idea takes hold of him. Dean Wicks of Princeton, watching boys grow up in college, says the sign that a boy has passed from the childish stage to that of a man is when he has found some important enterprise and s a y s, "I belong to that" or "That belongs to me."

Charles E. Blair

* * *

In one of his works Charles Kingsley makes the suggestive and vigorous remarks that "there never was anyone who spoke out the truth yet on earth, who was not called a 'howling idiot' for his pains at first." To anyone who is at all acquainted with the general facts and teachings of history, the remark will appear by no means too sweeping . . . The madman is very frequently a man of one idea. Some one oppressive thought has burnt itself into his brain, absorbs his attention by day and colors his dreams by night, and he seems to know and care for nothing besides. It is not, therefore, much to be wondered at that men of the world, to whom money, power, pleasure, luxury, are the sole ends of existence, should transfer this aspect of a disordered mind to those who have lived and labored under the impulsion of s t r o n g religious en-

thusiasm and brand them as monomaniacs . . . The mission of William Carey to India was publicly characterized in the British House of Commons by one of its aristocratic members as "the mission of a madman." When Fulton proposed to navigate the river Hudson in a steamboat, he was met with rude jokes, incredulous smiles, and contemptuous sneers by the wiseacres of his day, who charitably denounced his idea as the silliest that ever entered a human brain.

The Defender

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There is a certain inescapableness about Jesus Christ. He is part of life, and no one born into this western world can escape the necessity, at one time or another, of making a decision about him. They will turn toward him or away from him. They will enjoy his companionship or they will find ways to be absent from places where he is sure to be present. Their judgment of Jesus is implied in their actions, however much they may insist verbally on being loyal to him.

The fact is he lived a kind of life which continues to exist in the record of history and in the mind of man, as a measure of what man can be. Let a man consider it, ponder his own experience, in the light of it, and inevitably he must be exalted by it, lured and excited by the possibilities it reveals in himself, or on the other hand he is shamed by it, inwardly resents it, and goes to any length to get away from it. Everyone passes judgment on Jesus, but Jesus is a judgment, too.

Remember, however, that his judgment is redemptive, that is, for the complete fulfillment of all man's real possibilities. There is no fulfillment of human nature, merely on the physical plane, or in the economic sphere, or in the social world. There are partial and wait for their justification on his spiritual development as a soul. Samuel H. Miller

The greatest sight of pity is to see a man with a heart, but God not in it.

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The ability to say no is perhaps the greatest gift a parent has.

Sam Levenson

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One cannot love all men equally. We chose, and we ought to choose, the objects of our love. Love, humanity, must be positive. People often take the hatred of another nation to be the love of one's own. It is far higher to feel no hatred but to love positively.

Thomas G. Masaryk

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The difference between existence and life is the intelligent use of leisure. Herman S. Hughes

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Faith is a happier state of mind than doubt and suspicion. By this I live, for if I do not have faith in others, who will believe in me? I would rather believe in a thousand people, friends and strangers, and have 999 fail me than not believe. If many fail me, I remember how many I have failed.

This is not to say that the blind belief of sentimentality, the so-called "tolerance" of the dishonest and vicious, is sensible or rewarding. There are some dark corners which do not react to sweetness and light. Belief in people should be accomplished with open eyes and clarity of judgment. But when your judgment proves bad rather than good, it's no reason to walk thereafter with suspicion as a companion.

None knows another's heart, his grief, his struggle, his despair and motivation. Not all our geese become swans, but one swan will atone for many flocks of geese. All men share pain and mortality, some bear these better than others. And multitudes have perished spiritually for the lack of another's belief in them.

Faith Baldwin